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Red Riding Hood and the Wolf in Bed: Modernism's Fairy Tales (review)

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that links body and daemon," is treated in the trilogy in such a way that "neither term in the spirit-matter binary is hierarchically superior or capable of existing independently of the other term" (190). Bird relates this to Derrida's "original conception of deconstruction" (190), but notes that Pullman's strategy goes beyond showing the interrelationship of the positive and negative terms; Dust in his hands becomes "an ambiguous, mystical presence in which everything coexists" (190). Bird concludes noting that "Pullman circumvents the grand narrative, creating instead an open, more egalitarian vision in which Dust functions as a new focus for people's spirituality, without which, according to Pullman's trilogy, humanity not only lacks purpose or meaning, but equally as important, a sense of wonder and mystery" (197).

With the trilogy, Philip Pullman has achieved popular acclaim, literary awards, Internet Website and blog attention, and theatrical and film adaptation. That His Dark Materials *Illuminated* is published by an academic press signals the presence of another kind of respectful attention and appreciation for the trilogy. The quality of the anthology's essays is high and they well repay the attention spent studying them. Like the other books reviewed here, Lenz and Scott's anthology is a valuable resource for understanding *His Dark Materials*. A comprehensive index, not found nearly often enough in anthologies, adds to the usefulness of the collection.

Each of these works provides worthwhile guidance to *His Dark Materials*. Readers, teachers, and scholars looking for a reader's companion, a book-length interpretive treatment, or a well-chosen collection of scholarly essays will find each of these three books a source of enlightenment on the trilogy for themselves, their readers, and their students.

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Martin, Ann. *Red Riding Hood and the Wolf in Bed: Modernism's Fairy Tales.* Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2006.

In *Alice to the Lighthouse: Children's Books and Radical Experiments in Art,* Juliet Dusinberre sets out to connect the child readers of *Alice* and other children's literature not only with the adults they later became,

"but to a generation of thought and writing" (1). How, she asks, did such modern writers as Virginia Woolf, reflect and transform their childhood reading in their own texts? Ann Martin explores a similar question in *Red Riding Hood and the Wolf in Bed: Modernism's Fairy Tales*. She examines how three modern writers' allusions to fairy tales reflect these writers' views of their cultures, including such anxiety-laden factors as sexuality and gender roles, class mobility, commodification, and the relationships between tradition and present.

In the first chapter, "Turning Back the Covers: Fairy Tales in the Modern Age," Martin briefly summarizes the history of the literary fairy tale in Western culture, from Apuleius's "Cupid and Psyche" in the second century AD, to the French salons of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and British chapbooks through the eighteenth century, to the pantomimes and Christmas books of the Victorians. She emphasizes the nineteenth-century's ambivalence about fairy tales: on the one hand, they evoked the "innocence" and "primitive nature" of the child and the peasant, whereas, on the other, their adaptation into modern culture in such forms as pantomimes, advertisements, and expensive picture books, suggested corruption and commodification. Martin suggests that this conflicted feeling, as well as the large number of variants, helped make the fairy tale a rich source of allusions for modern writers.

In this chapter, Martin also explains her decision to focus specifically upon James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and Djuna Barnes. Although other twentieth-century writers reference fairy tales in their work, these three are among those who "use the stories to involve not just the past but the present" (40). Thus, Joyce, Woolf, and Barnes not only use the stories to suggest nostalgia and innocence, but to explore contemporary conflicts. Their fairy tale allusions also suggest the characters' and readers' power to make meaning. The characters actively adapt fairy tales to make sense of their lives, and readers must examine multiple, sometimes contradictory, fairy tale references to arrive at their own conclusions.

Martin then proceeds to in-depth explorations of these writers' fairy tale allusions in some of their texts, drawing upon cultural, psychological, and gender theory to do so. In "James Joyce: The Fashionable Fairy Tale," Martin suggests that Joyce uses "Cinderella" to investigate both the possibility of class mobility in modern times and the loss of self this may involve. For example, in Joyce's *Ulysses,* Stephen Daedalus is offered employment by several fairy godmother figures, but fears they would make him "a commodity in a capitalist system toward which he feels most ambivalent" (64). However, characters can also use fairy tales for their own ends, as is shown by the characters of Bloom and Gerty Macdowell,

who use "Beauty and the Beast" as a pattern for their sexual fantasies, but also tailor the story to meet their individual needs.

In "Virginia Woolf: A Slipper of One's Own," Martin notes that fairy tales were very much a part of Woolf's literary upbringing. She made frequent reference to them in her journals and essays, as well as in her fiction. In particular, Martin describes the influence of Woolf's aunt, Anne Thackery Ritchie, who wrote adaptations of older fairy tales, such as Perrault's "Cinderella." Martin suggests that, in citing and transforming these stories, Woolf both acknowledges Ritchie as a female literary ancestress, and sabotages the Victorian values reflected in Ritchie's adaptations. In Woolf's *Orlando,* for example, the protagonist undergoes Cinderella-like transformations, but subverts traditional views of social class, sexual orientation, and male dominance.

In "Djuna Barnes: Wolves in Sheep's Clothing," Martin suggests that the writer's use of fairy tale characters and patterns become sites in which she explores and interrogates social class, gender roles, and sexuality. For example, in Barnes's *Nightwood,* the character Robin represents both Sleeping Beauty, the lovely and helpless woman objectified by the prince, and the cross-dressing wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood," who shifts gender roles by wearing the grandmother's clothes.

Martin also examines Barnes's ambivalent relationship with her paternal grandmother, Zadel Barnes, who also made use of fairy tales in her fiction. The financial supporter and matriarchal authority of the family, Zadel Barnes was also a "ringmaster," presiding over the "chaotic circus" of the Barnes household (151). On the one hand, Barnes's family was a source of empowerment, defying social expectations of sexuality and gender role. But on the other, it condoned sexual abuse of the child Barnes. Martin suggests that some of Barnes's fictional grandmothers may represent her complex feelings about her own grandmother: "The older woman is a 'master' but also a mistress; she is clothed in the garments of authority, but 'plump[ly] tests their boundaries. Her cross-dressing is disturbing but also 'ridiculous'" (151).

Martin's brief "Conclusion: Slipping Out from between the Sheets" is somewhat unsatisfactory. Asserting that fairy tales' long cultural history, including multiple interpretations and encodings, makes them especially open for further revisions and exploration with tradition, she launches into a short discussion of feminist retellings of fairy tales, and implies that the future for other feminist writers is open. This did not seem to fit the rest of the book. Although discussions of gender roles and sexuality are important in each of the chapters, they are not the sole focus of the book. The hope that the final chapter would pull together Martin's detailed readings of the

individual writers and provide a stronger sense of her work in the context of fairy tale and modernist criticism was not realized.

A few of Martin's interpretations seem forced. For example, she asserts that the Grimms "depict Red as a spoiled child and posit greed as a major factor in her downfall" (122). This would raise the eyebrows of many fairy tale scholars, since the Grimms make it so obvious that Red's crime is her disobedience. And Martin's claim that Red's eagerness to pick flowers shows gluttony—especially as she plans to give the flowers to her grandmother—is unconvincing.

For the most part, however, Martin's readings of these texts well-researched and intriguing, and *Red Riding Hood and the Wolf in Bed* would be valuable to anyone interested in modernist literature, especially those studying Joyce, Woolf, or Barnes. Although this work is only marginally connected to children's literature studies, certainly folklorists will find its ideas compelling.

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Beckett, Sandra L., and Maria Nikolajeva. eds. *Beyond Babar: The European Tradition in Children's Literature*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow P, 2006.

According to Sandra Beckett, this collection of critical essays on European children's literature had originally been conceived as a volume on the best international children's books and a companion volume to the three volumes of *Touchstones: Reflections of the Best in Children's Literature*, edited by Perry Nodelman and published by the Children's Literature Association between 1985 and 1989, which focused on works written in English. This global perspective, however, has been impeded by the fact that many deserving non-European works have not been translated into